

**BOARD OF REGISTERED NURSING**

P.O. Box 944210, Sacramento, CA 94244-2100

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Ruth Ann Terry, MPH, RN, Executive Officer



## **GUIDELINES FOR PROPOSED NEW PROGRAMS TO PREPARE STUDENTS FOR REGISTERED NURSING LICENSURE**

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### **PURPOSE OF THE GUIDELINES**

The purpose of these guidelines is to provide the educational institution with direction for seeking approval of a new pre-licensure registered nursing program.

### **STEPS IN THE APPROVAL PROCESS**

In accordance with Business and Professions Code, Section 2786(a), those programs that are institutions of higher education may apply for accreditation of a new program. Those programs that are not an institution of higher education shall make arrangements with an institution of higher education in the same general area to grant degrees. These arrangements must be made prior to seeking approval from the Board of Registered Nursing (BRN). A proof of this agreement must be provided with the feasibility study, described in Step 2.

There are prescribed steps in Title 16, California Code Regulations (CCR), Section 1421, for an educational institution/ sponsoring hospital to follow to receive approval from the BRN. The new program may not admit students until approval has been granted. Institutions need to be aware that the entire approval process may take approximately two years.

### **STEP 1**

Submit a Letter of Intent to the BRN. The letter is to be addressed to:

Executive Officer  
Board of Registered Nursing  
P.O. Box 944210  
Sacramento, CA 94244-2100

### **STEP 2**

Submit to the BRN a report on the assessment of need for the proposed program, **a feasibility study**. Though not mandated by law, it is strongly recommended that a feasibility study be done. It is a valuable tool that can assist in validating the need for a program in the community and can also assist in the determination not to develop a program. It is recommended that the person writing the feasibility study be familiar with the nursing education and the BRN rules and regulations.

The feasibility study should include the following:

- a) A definition of the geographic area (community) served by the educational institution/sponsoring hospital.

- b) A description of the characteristics of the population in the community to include:
  - 1) Current and emerging health needs based on statistical studies, to include age groups, socio-economic status, and other related information.
  - 2) Current and emerging educational goals and needs based on statistical studies, to include the number of schools, private and public, elementary through post secondary, with enrollment and completion data, including the following:
    - 2.1) A listing of the existing nursing programs in the community preparing people for licensure; the type of program (vocational, associate, diploma, baccalaureate, and/or generic master's); and enrollment in these programs.
    - 2.2) A listing of the existing programs in the community preparing people for employment in the field of nursing other than licensure level, such as nursing assistant, etc.
- c) The clinical agencies, which may be utilized for learning experiences.
- d) Data on the number of budgeted vacancies for registered nurses that exist in the community, and the level of preparation required to fill the vacancies.
- e) A description of any plans within the community for future addition or expansion of health facilities.
- f) A statement on and description of the type of program being proposed, i.e., associate, diploma, baccalaureate, or generic masters.
- g) A target date for admitting students and the projected enrollment for the next five years.
- h) Provisions for required subject matter and support areas, including faculty and resources. (Consult the CCR, Section 1426 Required Curriculum for required subject matter). Support areas include such items as library and counseling.)
- i) A statement on initial and ongoing budgetary provisions for the proposed program, including the funding sources.
- j) Verification from health care agencies in the community of their willingness to cooperate with the use of the facilities for student learning experiences. Verification shall include the accommodations specifying shift and days available for proposed new students. Students from existing nursing programs **cannot** be displaced.
- k) Community support for the proposed program must be documented in Health Facility Verification Form (EDP-P-14) for each health facility the program plans to use.
- l) Plans for interpreting the proposed program to high school counselors, potential applicants, and other interested persons.

### **STEP 3**

Upon receipt of the feasibility study, the Supervising Nursing Education Consultant (SNEC) will work with the planners of the proposed nursing program throughout the approval process. Close communication with the SNEC must be maintained during this time period. Files of programs without a communication for more than two years are destroyed.

The SNEC will review the feasibility study. The process for the review usually takes three to four weeks. The SNEC will send a letter to the proposed program indicating the date and time for the Education and Licensing Committee (ELC) when the review is completed. The feasibility study will be presented to the ELC committee members who then will recommend to the full Board the acceptance or non-acceptance of the feasibility study.

## **STEP 4**

Upon the Board of Registered Nursing's acceptance of the feasibility study, a Nursing Education Consultant (NEC) will be appointed. The proposed program may then hire an RN program director, who meets the qualifications of Section 1425(b), to develop a plan for implementation of the proposed program in compliance with BRN approval criteria stated in CCR, Section 1424.

The school approval process requires that the program submit to the assigned NEC, at least six months prior to the projected date of student enrollment, a self-study report, which describes the proposed program's compliance with all the BRN rules and regulations.

The Self-Study Report must include, but is not limited, to the following sections of the CCR:

1) **1424(b)---Written Policies and Procedures:** Must have developed policies and procedures related to: admission; probation; withdrawal; readmission; attendance; maintenance and retrieval of records; grading; advanced placement; grievances (1428b); LVN 30 unit option (1429); and transfer and challenge 2786.6.

2) **1424(d)---Resources:**

- Library--Identify approximate number and type of library holdings already available, if any; specify amount allocated for purchase of library resources, as well as the texts and journals; AV, CAT, videos, etc. to be ordered with the moneys. NEC to visit library during approval visit.
- Physical Plant--Include location and description of proposed program site in self-study, including a Skills Lab. NEC to visit site during approval visit.
- Staff--Specify secretarial/clerical services that are and/or will be available to the program as well as any staff for the skills lab.
- Support Services--Describe other support services, (e.g. counseling, child care, learning assistance center, etc.), that is and/or will be available.
- Equipment-- Identify existing equipment/supplies and specify supplies/ equipment that will be purchased. Include the amount of money available for the purchases.

3) **1425---Faculty Qualifications and Changes:** Appoint a director. Review this section for qualifications for the RN Director of the program. Also specify the number of total faculty that will be utilized in the program. Include the number in each BRN classification, i.e., instructor, assistant instructor, and clinical teaching assistant; and the number of full-time and part-time. Submit faculty approval forms for any person already identified as a potential faculty member and the timeline for employment of all faculty. Submit program organizational chart and faculty job descriptions and qualifications.

Before entering into an employment agreement with any faculty, be mindful that students cannot be admitted until the proposed program receives BRN approval.

4) **1426---Curriculum:** Sufficient curriculum materials must be submitted to enable the NEC to make a determination of whether or not the program is in compliance with the content requirements specified in regulations and that, upon successful completion of the program, the graduate will be able to function at the entry level and in accordance with 1443.5, i.e., Standards of Competent Performance. At a minimum, this would include:

- philosophy;
- terminal/program objectives;
- conceptual framework;
- syllabus for at least the first year nursing courses and time frame for the development of the remaining course syllabi;

- course descriptions and outlines, theoretical and clinical objectives, and clinical evaluation tools for all nursing courses.

The theoretical and clinical objectives must be sufficiently detailed to demonstrate a direct correlation with the clinical evaluation tools. The following Board forms must also be submitted: "Total Curriculum Plan", (EDP-P-05); and "Required Curriculum: Content Required for Licensure", (EDP-P-06).

- 5) **1427---Clinical Facilities:** Complete "Health Facility Verification Form" (EDP-P-14) for each agency that will be utilized. Visits to clinical agencies are required if there is any question about the ability of the agency to provide adequate clinical experience, e.g., low census, age of population, patient population profile, etc.

## **STEP 5**

Upon receipt of the self-study report, a NEC schedules an on-site visit to verify and/or clarify the report and assess compliance with BRN rules and regulations. The NEC's findings, along with the program report are submitted to the Education/ Licensing (ELC) Committee, which in turn, recommends to the Board initial approval/ not approval of the proposed nursing program. Representatives of the educational institution/ sponsoring hospital must be present at the ELC meeting to respond to any questions.

## **STEP 6**

The Board will take action on the proposal for the new program at a regularly scheduled BRN meeting. Representatives of the educational institution/sponsoring hospital are encouraged to be present to respond to any questions.

## **STEP 7**

Upon Board approval of the proposed program, the program receives notification of approval and may admit students.

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Executive Officer

**PROGRAM CLINICAL FACILITY VERIFICATION FORM**

The nursing program must verify that clinical facilities offer necessary learning experiences to meet course/clinical objectives.

Name of the School:	Name of Director/Designee:
	Telephone Number:
Name of health care facility:	Name of Director of Nursing/Designee:
Type of health care facility (Acute, OPD, SNF, etc.)	Telephone Number:
Average Daily Census for the agency:	

	Medical-Surgical	Obstetrics	Pediatrics	Psych – Mental Health	Geriatrics
Type of units where students can be placed in the health care facility (Place X in the column)					
Average daily census for each area					
Average personnel staffing for the shift for a unit (Include number of RNs, LVNs, CNAs, separately)					
Number of students placed in the unit at any one time.					
Identify shifts and days available for placement of students in the program					

**Provide the following information on all other schools utilizing your facility:****Attach additional sheets if needed.**

Schools	Category of students (RN, LVN, CNA, etc.)	Number of students	Days & Hours	Semesters (Fall, Spr.)	Units used

*Checklist for starting in a new clinical facility:*

- ☐ Provide clinical objectives, faculty responsibilities, faculty and student orientation plan to clinical facility.
- ☐ Signed contract on file, prior to starting
- ☐ Develop a plan for continued communication between school and facility, i.e., instructor/facility staff meeting, agency/faculty/student meeting each semester, annual faculty/facility staff meeting, Dean/Director conferences each semester.

Signature of Program Director/Designee	Date